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AUTHOR Danielson, Trygve R.
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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the effect of drama-based instruction on the learning of social skills by students labeled as "low ability" in a 10th-grade required English class in a rural high school. Two separate classes of "low ability" 10th-grade English students in Jamesville, Wisconsin, were presented with social skills training utilizing role playing, script writing, and improvisation. Data were collected from students, teachers, and observers to determine, record, and analyze any differences in social skills between classes. Results indicated that: (1) drama-based instruction appeared to influence the learning of social skills in a number of ways; (2) some positive growth occurred in attitudes about social skills within each class, while little difference occurred in attitudes between classes; (3) the use of theater games was highly effective in creating an environment that would allow non-threatening group interaction; (4) basic drama activities appeared to work best; and (5) to make a drama-based classroom work, students must be required to participate right from the start. Findings suggest that drama can be used as an effective tool to create a positive classroom climate with basic skill students at the high school level. (Contains 28 references and excerpts from a teacher's log are attached.) (RS)

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ED 367 000

EVALUATING THE ABILITY OF DRAMA-BASED INSTRUCTION TO INFLUENCE THE SOCIALIZATION OF TENTH GRADE ENGLISH STUDENTS LABELED AS "LOW ABILITY"

Trygve R. Danielson
Parker Senior High School
Janesville, Wisconsin

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New York University
School of Education, Health, Nursing and Arts Professions
32 Washington Place
Suite 52
New York, N.Y. 10003
(212) 998-5060

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BACKGROUND

Statement of Investigation

The major issue of this study concerned the effect of drama-based instruction on the learning of social skills by students labeled as "low ability" in a 10th grade required English class in a rural high school. Two separate classes of "low ability" 10th grade English students were presented with social skills training utilizing role-playing, script writing, and improvisation. Data was collected from students, teachers, and observers before and during the study to determine, record and analyze any differences in social skills between classes. This study sought answers to the following questions:

- How do students labeled "low ability" function using drama strategies?
- How did the use of drama strategies influence the social behaviors of each class?
- What drama techniques best developed social skills in each class?
- What defines the role of the teacher in a drama-based classroom?

Need for Study

Drama education does not have the widespread placement in the curriculum of American high schools that music and the visual arts enjoy. In 1988, the National Endowment for the Arts' report to Congress on arts education, *Toward Civilization*, stated that although 49% of high schools in the United States offered courses in dramatic arts only 13% of the student population ever enrolled in these courses. (National Endowment for the Arts: 59) Clearly the value of drama education has not been established for educators, students or their parents. The widespread perception is that drama activities center around "putting on a play," often as an extra-curricular activity rather than on theater as a discipline worthy of inclusion in the education of most, if not all, students. As the discipline itself is misunderstood, the benefits of theater education which include the development of communication skills, interpersonal skills and critical thinking skills are not widely known.

Research on how involvement in the discipline of drama may help those students labeled "low ability" acquire and use social skills is especially important. Teachers of these students know that there is always great

difficulty in creating a positive classroom climate in a class labeled "low ability". (It must be understood that many students labeled "low ability" also fit into the category of students seen as "at risk".) Without some sense of security and belonging in school, students are more likely to fail. Teachers recognize that a positive classroom climate is essential if learning is to take place. By the time mainstream students enter high school, they have developed enough social skills to assist in the creation of such a climate. These students most usually can be counted on to join with classmates and teachers in helping to promote a positive classroom climate.

Most often, this is not the case with "low ability' or "at risk" students. Many of them are not able to function appropriately in any social setting including school. Their lack of comprehension of cooperation and interdependency is a key factor in the potential failure of these students. If is seems appropriate that "at risk" students should possess social skills, the best methodologies to acquire them should be explored. It is the premise of this researcher that drama-based instruction offers a fruitful way to improve the social skills.

Sufficient attention has not been paid to determining the most logical and appropriate placement for the discipline within the curriculum. At this time, drama education often falls within the responsibility of a school's English department. Since virtually every high school student including those labeled "low ability" must enroll in four years of English or English-affiliated courses, including drama within the core subject of English, could thereby potentially positively affect a larger pool of students. In addition, integrating this discipline into a core discipline could well demonstrate the value of drama as a learning mode, thereby increasing the opportunity to integrate drama education into the general high school curriculum. It is hoped that this study will help determine if and how drama can help "at risk" students gain important social skills.

Supporting Literature

The literature that supports this study comes from three basic educational areas: drama/theatre, socials skills' acquisition, and language arts development. While writings in drama/theatre by various authors, including Brian Way and Dorothy Heathcote, have generally outlined the value of drama in education, Roma Burgess and Pamela Gaudry presented some valuable ideas in*Time for Drama: A Handbook for Secondary Teachers* about the role drama can play in the development of communication skills. These authors suggest that the use of drama in education needs to be carefully approached by trained drama teachers to insure that the learner not only have the drama experience, but that they also understand what that experience means (Burgess, 1985). Burgess and Gaudry also reinforce the idea that the value of drama stems from its ability to allow students to learn experientially:

> Students work imaginatively and creatively from their experiences of life to create the artificial and symbolic life of the drama.
> (1985:17)

The suggestion of experiential learning is particularly important when dealing with "low ability" or "at risk" students as this study does. There is little doubt that without the increased physical activity of drama exercises these students would find limited success in class.

Another pertinent point these authors raise concerns the function of the infusion of drama in education (D-I-E) as a way of increasing personal knowledge and understanding of others:

> Being sensitive, aware, and tolerant of others, developing personal confidence in expressing thoughts and initiating ideas are interpersonal qualities that are vital. (ibid:24)

Burgess and Gaudry's work illustrates the value that drama has for high school students.

Robert Landy explores the role of drama in education in his book *Handbook of Educational Drama and Theatre*. Landy suggests that drama may be used in schools in three general ways:

- through formal performances,
- as a method for teaching other subjects,
- as a means of enhancing social and emotional development.

It is his last observation that is of most interest to this research about social skill acquisition by "at risk" students. Drama is clearly useful as a tool to develop appropriate social behaviors.

These and other drama specialists have clearly supported the value of drama in education and raised the question of whether drama can help teach social skills to at risk students.

Supporting literature from the area of social skills acquisition comes primarily from a report by Gwendolyn Cartledge and Jo Anne F. Milburn entitled "The Case for Teaching Social Skills in the Classroom - a Review" in the *Review of Educational Research* in 1978. This review establishes the value of teaching social skills in the classroom to all students. Because this review suggests that social skills are highly significant for success in the classroom, it certainly seems appropriate to search for the best way to teach such skills.

The best source of supporting literature in the language arts area comes form the work of Dr. John Stewig. Since social skills are so closely linked to language arts abilities this study connects language arts and social skills through drama activities. In his 1973 book *Spontaneous Drama* Stewig asserts that drama is the main way children learn in and out of school because drama activities provide a student-centered, creative approach to learning.

DESIGN OF STUDY

Description of Setting

This study took place at Parker Senior High School in Janesville, Wisconsin during the first semester of the 1989-90 school year. Parker High School is fairly typical small town high school in southern Wisconsin. With a student population of around 1500, Parker attempts to provide a comprehensive curriculum with moderate success. Our state has made a very strong push for more academic requirements in the last few years which has resulted in the loss of numerous elective courses. The areas most affected have been, surprisingly, technical education, and, typically, the arts. These changes have given students less flexibility and input into their course selections which has indirectly affected the climate of our school.

The Janesville School system has also gone through a period of declining enrollment on and off for the last ten years. Our enrollment at Parker went from a high of nearly 2000 students in the late 70's and early 80's to a low of around 1450 in 1987. The decline is even more startling considering that Parker went from a three year to a four year high school during the same time. This decline is significant to this study because Parker is still trying to solve transition problems.

Socially, Parker reflects the values and norms of Janesville. Janesville is a conservative, blue collar town with a very small minority population. Parker's students tend to reflect the traditional, conservative morality of the community.

As a teacher-researcher at Parker High School, I have been limited by the lack of "flexible" time given to teachers in general. Teachers have very little opportunity to structure their own time during the school day. During this study my teaching assignment consisted of five classes on four subjects (Basic English, Acting, Dramatic Literature, Public Speaking) and a study hall supervision during a seven period day. Along with my classroom duties, I was also directing the school musical at night. This is not an unusual schedule in the English Department at our school and there is no doubt that the scope of this study was limited by my schedule.

Documentation

The date for this study was collected in four major ways. The first method of collection followed the traditional pre-test/post-test format. Before the application of the drama based social skill unit students were asked to complete a twenty item survey designed to measure their own perception of their social skills. At the end of the unit the students were given the same

survey to complete. This survey provided a measurable way to determine the impact of the social skill unit. Each student was also asked to complete a Likert type survey designed to measure self-esteem. The intent was to use this data to determine if some students had particular special needs. All students were asked to complete a general questionnaire about themselves. Include were questions about personal goals, likes/dislikes, habits, hobbies, etc. These questionnaires were used as the basis for conferences scheduled for later in the class.

Another major method of data collection involved a teacher log. In the log, observations were recorded concerning student behaviors and class activities. Two other teachers were consulted about circumstances in the class during the study and their observations are included in the log. (These teachers also attempted to observe individual students at various times in the study using a social skills assessment instrument, but found the assessment inconclusive.) This log provided qualitative support to the complex behaviors observed during the study.

A third method of data collection included student interviews at various times during the study. It was originally planned that certain students would keep a written log of classroom experiences, but because of their reticence about writing conferences were used instead. (Students conferences served the dual purpose of providing vital teacher-student interaction to discuss academic progress and other significant issues.) This source of information provided and insight into the experiences of the students during the study and gave them the opportunity to share "ownership" of the study.

The last method of data collection involved the use of video recording during class activities. This method was used to allow teacher-researchers the opportunity to study specific class interactions after the fact. The use of videotape provides an objective view of the classroom that can be very useful for observations. This study found some very specific limitations for the use of videotaping which will be discussed in detail later in the report.

These various methods of data collection and analysis provided a wide variety of perspectives on collected information. While some methods seemed more useful than others, each complimented the other.

Methodology

One of the most frustrating problems in this study was creating a mechanism to measure something that is very difficult to measure. I discovered that those items that could be scientifically measured (counted, charted, etc.) were not the things I wanted to know about. For instance, in my attempt to discover the influence of drama activities on social skill acquisition I might have counted the number of times a student initiated a

conversation, or how often one student smiled at another. Unfortunately, this information does not really let me know the student's state of mind during the experience which is essential if we are to understand what the experience means to the student. With that in mind, this study attempts to document what happens to the social skills of "low ability" English students when they are presented through drama experiences in two different classes. The methodology attempts to make some quantitative measurements of attitude change in the students while at the same time documenting the non-measurable things that occur in the classroom at any given time. There is little doubt that any study concerning the influence of drama on learning must include far more than the measurement of correct answers on a test. This study is fundamentally trying to understand the very complex phenomenon and it is virtually impossible to control all phenomenon and it is virtually impossible to control all the variables. All we can really do is watch what happens and report what took place hoping to improve the ability of teachers to recreate the good things and eliminate the bad.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Evaluation

The findings of this study can be grouped around the basic questions the study set out to explore. Drama based instruction appears to influence the learning of social skills in a number of ways. The statistical findings of this study based on the pre-test/post-test instrument suggest that some positive growth occurred in attitudes about social skills within each class while little difference occurred in attitudes between classes.

The first hour class had twenty-one students respond to the pretest survey while seventeen completed the post-test. (The reduction of post-test respondents occurred due to student absence, withdrawal from class, or administrative disciplinary actions unrelated to class. These four respondents may have some impact on reporting the total scores.) Their responses indicate a high level of reticence about classroom cooperation and sharing at the start of the study. At the end, however, there is a marked change in attitude concerning their responsibilities in the group. At the start, eleven of twenty-one strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement "I like to speak out in class." In the post-test survey (seventeen responses) only six students strongly disagreed or disagreed. It is interesting to note that much of the change in attitude seemed to be gradual. For example, the number of students who said they liked to speak out in class remained two from start to finish while the number who disliked speaking out went from seven to three.

A large number of students in the pretest (eleven) strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement "I like to tell people what I'm feeling" while only four felt the same at the end. There also are some responses that indicate a new understanding of social roles.

When asked to respond to the statement "I'm no good at making friends" nine students strongly disagreed in the pre-test while only four strongly disagreed in the post-test. The implication is that these students my better understand what making a friend really means. In total, when pre-test and post-test responses are analyzed, the first hour class seemed to have become more positive about their individual responsibilities in this group.

The second hour class appeared to have had an even greater change in attitude than first hour in certain areas while presenting some rather confusing changes in others. In this class twenty-one students completed the pretest while twenty-two students completed the post-test. When asked "I like to speak out in class" fourteen students strongly disagreed or disagreed in the pretest while nine felt the same in the post-test which is very similar to first hour. On the other hand, when asked "I like meeting new people" ten students strongly agreed in the pretest while only five felt the same in the post-test. This might suggest that certain students may have found the group experiences negative. (The researcher suggests that

the second hour class did seem to have more problems with personality conflicts. This is the class that included a number of repeating students who were especially critical of certain other students. They tended to actively try to disrupt certain activities.) The responses of second hour tend to be less conclusive about attitude changes than the first hour group.

Class Questionnaire

Below is a list of statements about you and your feelings. You are asked to read each statement and circle the number that indicates if you agree or disagree. The numbers go from 1 (disagree the most) to 5 (agree the most). Please circle the number that represents your opinion.

Example:	Disagree				Agree
I like to speak out in class.	(1)	2	3	4	5

(Circling 1 tells me you disagree with the statement - you don't like to speak out.)

	Disagree				Agree
1. I like to speak out in class.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can get my friends to do what I want.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I like to get involved in group activities.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I'm no good at making friends.	1	2	3	4	5
5. I look at people when they talk to me.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I'm not the type to join in.	1	2	3	4	5
7. No one is really interested in my ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I really like the way I look.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Teachers never like me.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I hate it when I'm embarrassed in class.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Most people think I[m smart.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I like to tell people what I'm feeling.	1	2	3	4	5
13. My friends often ask me for advice.	1	2	3	4	5
14. People smile at me a lot.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I find it hard to say what I'm thinking.	1	2	3	4	5

16. I ask questions when I don't know what somebody means. 1 2 3 4 5

17. I like meeting new people. 1 2 3 4 5

18 I never raise my voice in conversation. 1 2 3 4 5

19. I compliment others a lot. 1 2 3 4 5

20. My friends tell me secrets. 1 2 3 4 5

FIRST HOUR

	21 Responses PRE-TEST					17 Responses POST-TEST				
#	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
1	7	4	7	1	2	3	3	8	1	2
2	4	8	6	3	0	1	6	7	2	1
3	3	4	9	4	1	1	1	6	5	4
4	9	1	3	7	1	4	6	5	2	0
5	2	0	7	5	8	0	1	7	6	3
6	7	7	4	2	1	2	7	6	1	1
7	6	4	6	3	2	3	5	7	2	0
8	1	4	11	2	3	1	3	6	3	4
9	7	4	6	2	2	4	7	5	1	0
10	4	1	0	4	12	1	0	5	4	7
11	5	4	9	1	2	1	4	0	1	2
12	6	5	6	2	2	2	2	7	4	2
13	3	3	6	5	4	1	1	7	7	1
14	3	2	6	7	3	0	0	6	8	3
15	5	2	7	3	4	2	2	8	2	3
16	1	3	9	7	1	0	4	6	6	1
17	2	0	5	6	9	0	0	6	6	5
18	8	5	4	2	2	7	4	4	1	1
19	1	4	14	2	0	0	1	11	5	0
20	2	1	2	7	9	0	0	4	5	8

SECOND HOUR											
21 Responses							22 Responses				
PRE-TEST							**POST-TEST**				
#	1	2	3	4	5		1	2	3	4	5
1	9	5	5	0	2		3	6	7	4	2
2	5	1	10	4	1		1	5	8	6	2
3	2	3	7	6	3		3	3	10	5	1
4	10	5	3	3	0		5	6	5	5	1
5	1	2	3	6	9		2	1	8	7	4
6	5	6	6	3	1		3	7	8	2	2
7	2	8	7	4	0		3	7	6	5	1
8	3	1	10	3	4		2	3	10	5	2
9	4	9	4	4	0		4	7	6	4	1
10	2	5	1	1	12		4	6	3	3	6
11	5	5	8	3	0		6	3	9	3	1
12	2	6	9	0	4		4	1	11	4	2
13	2	3	8	3	5		2	4	7	6	3
14	3	1	7	7	3		0	3	9	7	3
15	3	3	6	5	4		2	4	8	7	1
16	3	4	4	3	7		2	6	9	5	0
17	2	0	3	6	10		1	0	7	9	5
18	3	4	12	1	1		3	5	10	3	1
19	3	1	5	11	1		4	1	10	7	0
20	2	1	3	7	8		3	2	3	7	7

A primary goal of the study was to create an environment that would allow non-threatening group interaction as quickly as possible. The use of theatre games was highly effective in creating this environment. (A description of the various theatre games employed is provided in the appendix.) There are ten separate observations in the teacher log citing the positive interactions that occurred during theatre games activities (Teacher Log, p. 1,3,4,7,& 9). Both classes experienced the usual first day jitters and only after active participation in some basic theatre games did the class begin to develop some cohesion. There are also clear student observations to support this finding. Many students when asked to comment on the early activities in class responded with comments similar to Chris H.'s who said, "It's fun! It makes me want to come to class." These findings appear to hold true for both classes. There was a small problem with the 9:00A.M. class because of the large number of repeating students. These students were generally older and tried to cover their embarrassment at failing by acting indifferent to the class in general. However, the drama activities provided these students with the opportunity to raise their status by showing leadership and creativity (Teacher Log, p. 9 &20).

While the early drama activities seemed to promote learning readiness, it is less clear how drama influenced the actual learning of social skills. While there is evidence to suggest that students are willing to participate in

drama activities (Teacher Log, p. 1 & 4), it is also clear that the lack of communication skills can quickly cause the activity to falter (Teacher Log, p. 7). The remedy was simply to include some direct instruction about certain communication skills (listening, eye contact, etc.) to allow the activities to succeed. This observation reinforces Burgess and Gaudry's (1985) observation about the importance of trained theatre specialists selecting appropriate activities at the appropriate time. The conclusion seems to be that drama activities provide a high energy, student centered strategy that helped create a non-threatening environment which allows students to "play" with social behaviors while also learning some basic communication skill. In essence, the use of drama may be a potent device in the hands of the right person in creating learning readiness and positive classroom climate, but it probably needs to be coupled with other teaching strategies to work.

Another question that this study seeks to answer is: What drama techniques best develop social skills in each class? The findings of this study seem to suggest the drama activities that appear to work the best are the most basic. The students who participated in this study possessed very limited theatre skills and were, by necessity, limited in the complexity of activities (Teacher Log, p. 14). For example, at the start of this study students were asked to participate in a variety of activities from movement and sound games to improvisation. It did not take long to realize that improvisation was beyond most of these students in this setting. They did not know the skills of spontaneous drama and were "afraid" of performing. It was clear that some type of direct instruction about the art of drama would be necessary in order to go very far with the strategy in the classroom. (We did, in fact, provide some instruction in theatre art skills later with moderate instruction in theatre art skills late with moderate a success but that is beyond the scope of this report.) This finding seems to suggest that while children are very good at "playing" basic games in a self-selected environment, they are less apt to play more complicated games in a school a selected classroom. I would also suspect that these students, because of low self-esteem and age, are much more likely to find "playing" in front of others difficult. I should point out that this is not the case for every student. A number of these kids found an area where they could succeed. Jennifer C., in a videotaped role playing session, became highly animated and productive. In conclusion, the activities that were best at helping students learn social skills were activities that included physical activity, group cooperation, and competition.

Other Findings

This study also appeared to generate some miscellaneous findings that one described in the teacher logs.

It would seem that, to make a drama based classroom work, students must be required to participate right from the start. If a student is

allowed to not participate tension soon develops as students become self-conscious. It is possible to give a reticent student a less threatening role but be certain that the group sees everyone involved.

- It would appear that some direct instruction in the skills of theatre are necessary. Students will perform better if skills in improvisation are presented later in the class experience.

- Drama games in and of themselves do not provide growth for students who have difficulty with self-esteem or behavior inappropriateness. For these student role-playing often edged toward drama therapy which is beyond most high school teachers' training.

- Game playing is fundamentally difference from role playing. The level of skill increases when students are asked to explore situations in role. This is an area where drama training is essential for the teacher.

- Having acceptable social skills does not make a poor student a good student. In other works, there must be a positive classroom climate for quality learning to occur, but positive climate does not ensure academic growth.

- There is some conflict between drama based instruction and the traditional language arts curriculum.

Future Research

This study supports the notion that drama can be used as an effective tool to create positive classroom climate with basic skill students at the high school level. The implications to educators would seem obvious. Schools today are focusing on programs to help "at risk" students across the nation. The findings of this study support the use of drama in these programs. While much needs to be done concerning the precise nature of "drama activities", these activities can be a useful tool in the classroom in the hands of a trained teacher. The implication is that schools need to provide teachers with dramatic arts training the opportunity to work with students identified as "at risk". If we are concerned about helping the students who have the most trouble staying in school we need to provide in service training for teachers without theatre backgrounds in the strategies of drama based teaching.

In the future it will be necessary to study how drama strategies influence the cooperative learning skills of all students. This study seems to suggest that drama activities can be useful in creating group cohesion. Since there is a considerable amount of interest in cooperative learning at all levels of

schooling, and, since cooperative learning depends on group cohesion, it would seem logical to study how the two might work together.

This study supports the use of drama in language arts classes its ability to create a positive emotional atmosphere for learning to occur. In the future it will be necessary to document how drama strategies need to be coupled with other disciplines to create successful teaching strategies.

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APPENDIX

TEACHER LOG

Week 12 **Log** **Comments**

Monday 11/6 -- **Played Donkey, Elephant, etc.**
Low Energy
The class worked on writing from the text. Since we only have one class set we must do reading in class. The game made work easier. Tim F. absent, Dennis V. vacant

I almost find myself not wanting to know what creative and cleaver things I can do in class because I don't have time to make them all work. It is easier to follow the traditional path.

Tuesday 11/7 - **Writing day** -

Explained the writing process. They are writing diligently some finish quickly other write on.

Wednesday 11/8 - **Role Playing**

The class has been asked to role play journalist to write a story. We have been discussing creative and critical thinking and developing writing ideas through questioning. The role has given them very clear ideas to work on. We have not touched form yet, but it seems we are getting students to write this was followed up with a role simulation. Groups of students were asked to role play as executives to create a product to sell. Teachers: Frank L. Julie B. (Jenny C. Heidi H.m Carl H. work well) Jeremy, Chad, Gina, Daryl, and Todd most involved. Karen, Dennis, Pam, not involved.

Thursday 11/9 **Mrs. Kalshaeur - Category Activity**

It is amazing as I watch this morning how I recognize the loss of energy at 8:00 am I don't know if its because f Thursday or because of the Weather. When Denise lectured at the start, I felt like sleeping. Not that her presentation was dull, its the format. With this but student, lecturing must be very limited attention span is very limited. Now the class was very well behaved by not really involved. It was not until they were put

in groups that they started to get involved. While absence is large, the students here are working very well. Excellent interaction between Pam J. and Dale G. & Kowey - Brian K. & Daryl W. Activities in Cooperative learning are most effective. This activity could have been role played - Would different people categorize in different ways?

Week 15	Log	Page	Comments
Monday 11/27 - **Making Decisions** - Terrible Absence - Docile /Drained			
We played story line - Everyone participated even Knoly and Liba - Good energy breaker & builder Very quiet			Games are good for communication - more difficult for academics. Good at PRACTICING what student have learned Video Tape
Tuesday 11/28 - **Role Writing**			
Used as a Pre writing activity - Not very successful - students didn't seem to get into this very well. All participated but only after exteeded explanation. When is groups. they functioned well. Steve E.even invited Kwoy and Liba to join their group and I left them there. Jeff O. and Allan, and Sohum, Jason S. Ammee is being really uncooperative. this is stupid John R. and Jon K are egging her on. Chris H. and Allan S. are working well. Aimee is working better not that I have explained. She came late to class, again. Brainstorming - Adam, Jodi, Jon - Not able to focus. Not very good group work habits. I think I should limit this to partners.			
Wednesday 11/29 **Spelling Game** -			
Good Participation in game Good at building self esteem . ESL kids, Kavey and Liba, were able to participate with some success and no embarrassment because of their limited English. We worked on writing conference in class. Different to get to everyone. Pam J. has trouble with writing. I can't feel the hostility in the class that appears in others.			

Thursday 11/30 **HIT**

It appears that a main factor in the success of these students is attendance - We again have ten students absent. WE have been trying high energy games during the week but there are other tings causing absence,. This class sits quietly, docilely, at 8:15 in the morning. Their behavior is inappropriate, not because of what they are doing, but because of what they are NOT doing. They are only responding when directly asked.. Let's see if they improve as the class continues.. (It is so hard to track because students come to class with all this outside baggage. Vicky H. Just passed a note to Jenny C. to discuss a ride to school - Jenny I. was in a car accident. What other things do these kids have out...(?) that will interfere with our work in class? There must be a better way. Jenny C. has put her head down. When I asked her if she was ill she said "No. This is just boring. We need to feel free to use high energy games more without feeling guilty about not covering curriculum or not meeting standards." Do we do justice to these kids if we only play games?